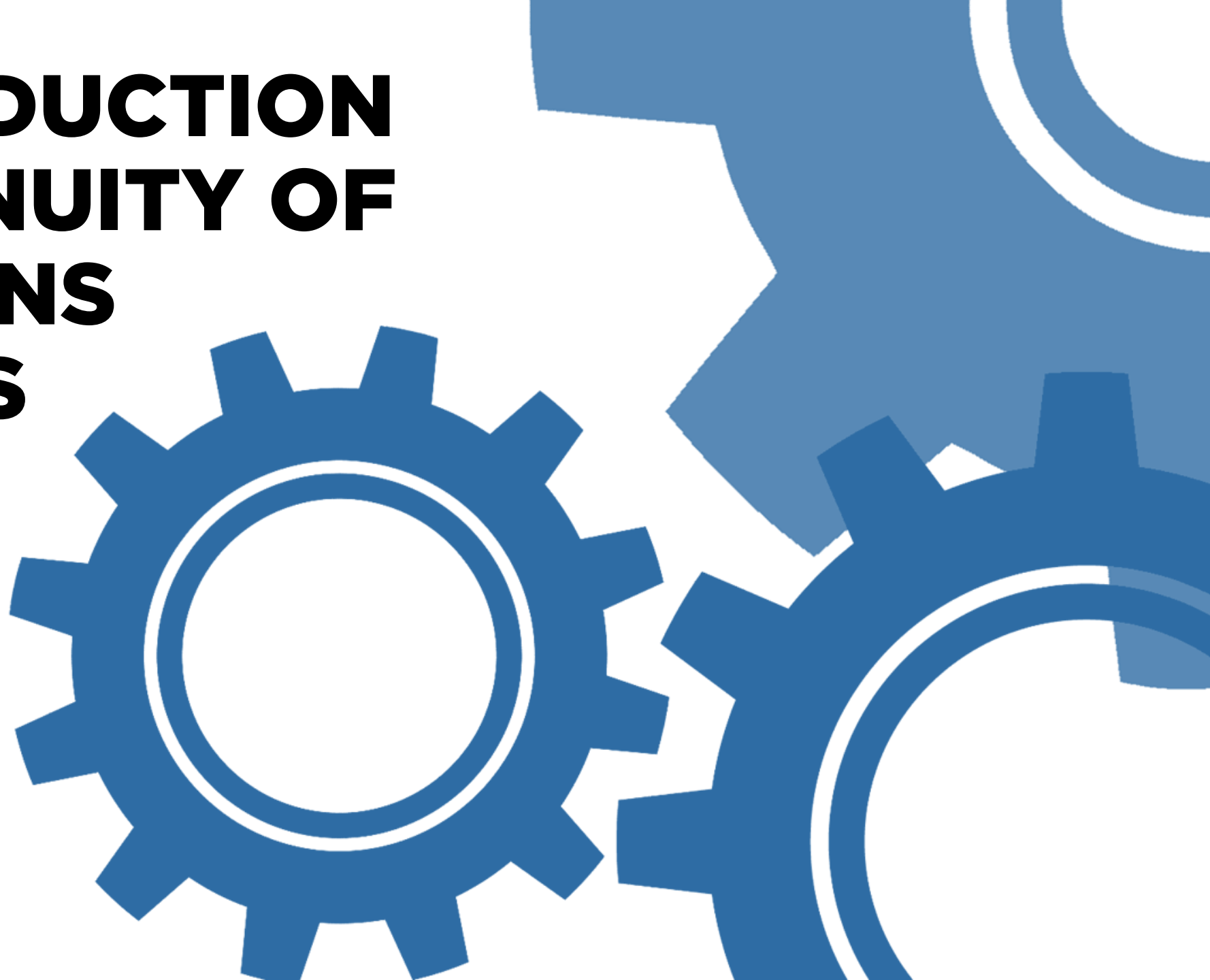


# **AN INTRODUCTION TO CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS EXERCISES**



# OVERVIEW: CONTINUITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE



## Response

Emergency Response

Detailed Scenario

During and Immediately after

**Test and Validate response**



## Continuity

Maintain Essential Functions

General Scenario

Several days or months

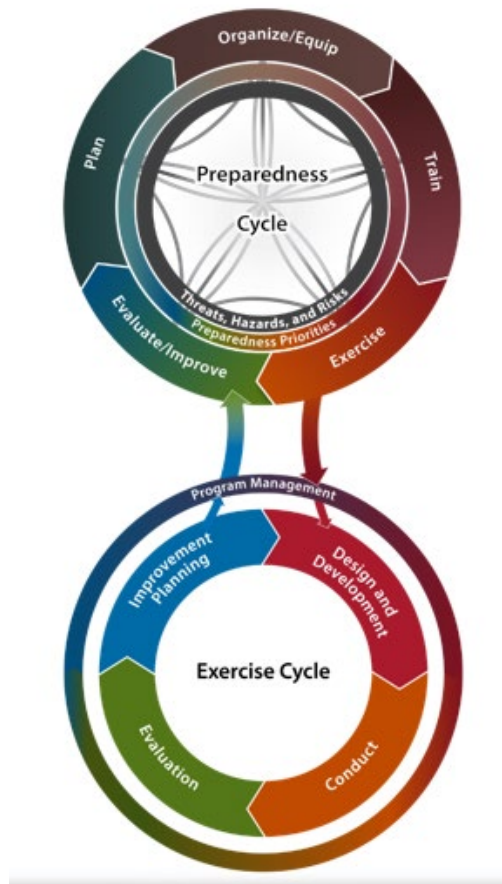
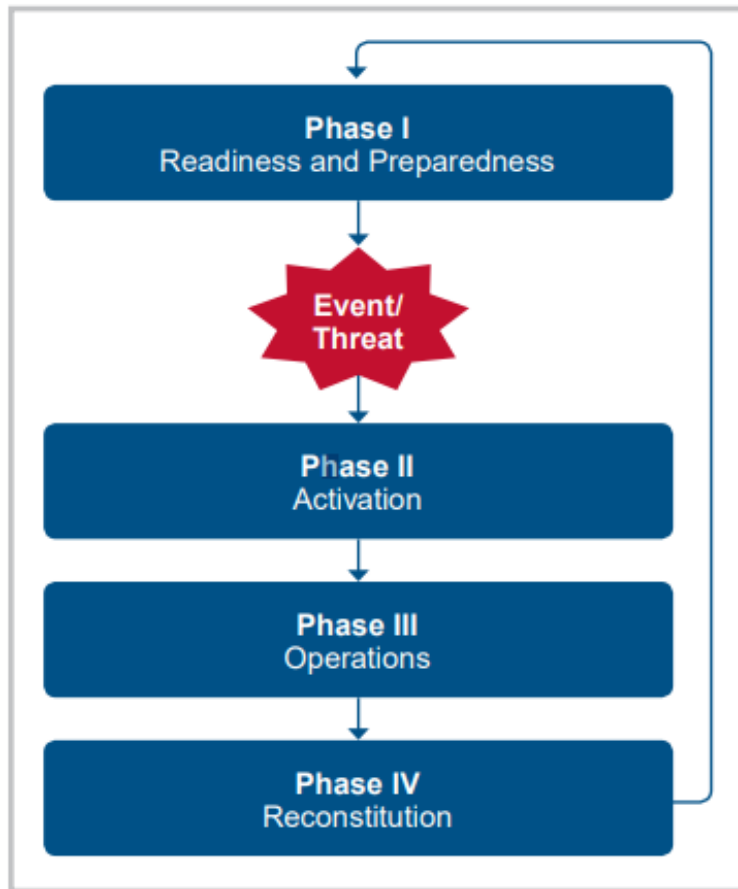
**Validate Continuity of Operations**

**HSEEP  
(HOMELAND  
SECURITY  
EXERCISE +  
EVALUATION  
PROGRAM)**

Federal level program and focus but can be adapted and applied to all levels

Best practices and lesson learned

Focuses on Program level and project level



# Continuity of Operations and the Exercise Planning Cycle

# EXERCISES SHOULD BE TESTING A CAPABILITY

5 Mission Areas for  
Core Capability  
Development

Prevention

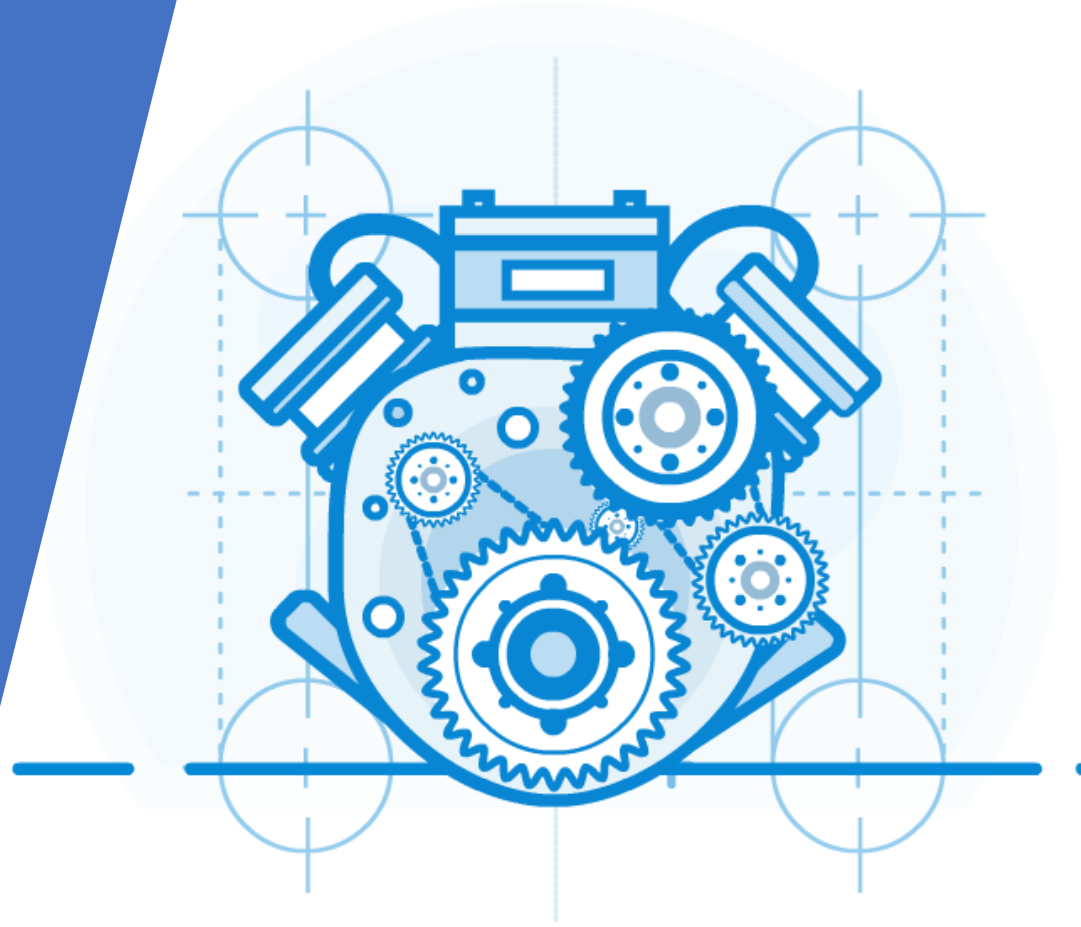
Protection

Mitigation

Response

Recovery

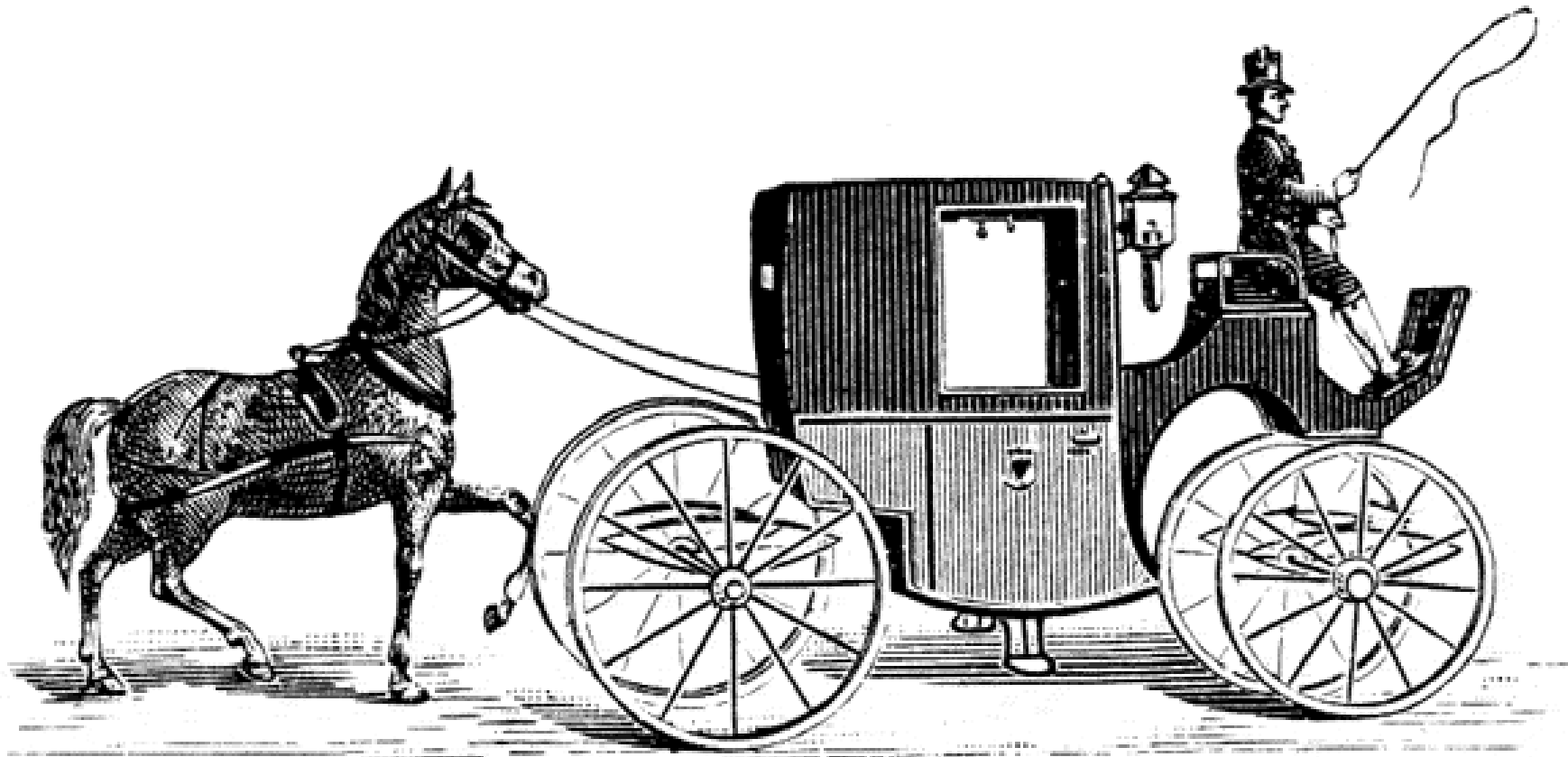
# 32 Core Capabilities



See the FEMA Core Capability Development Sheets found at  
<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/mission-core-capabilities/development-sheets>

So, the first step to planning your exercise is to look at your coop plan and see what capability you will test.

Don't start with the exercise and try to make it fit your plan.



# TYPES OF EXERCISES

## Discussion Based

- Tabletop
- Workshop
- Seminar
- Game

## Operations Based

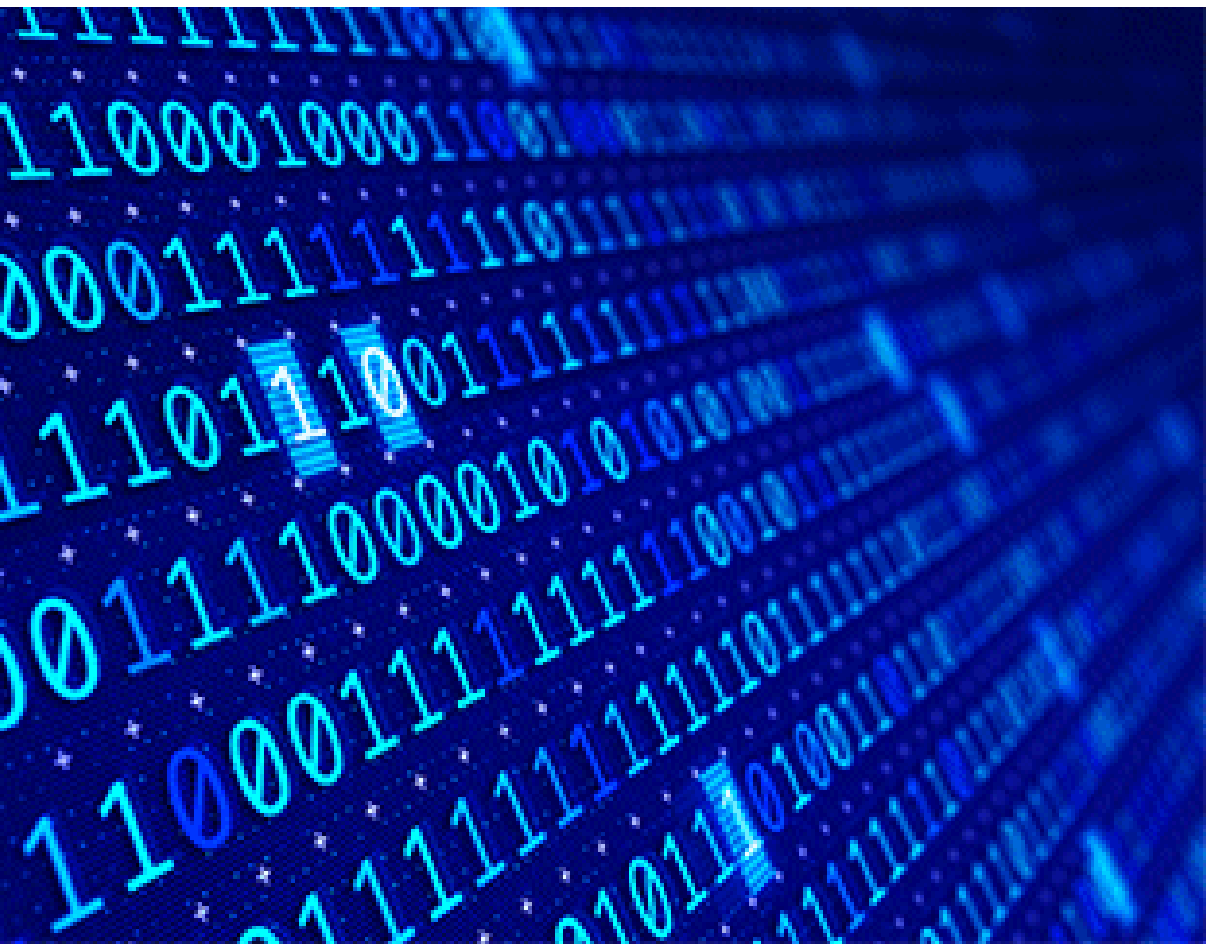
- Drills
- Functional
- Full Scale



# DRILLS

- Fire
- Active Shooter
- Shelter in Place (Tornado, hurricane, other inclement weather)
- Most common for state agencies under Operations Based





IT tests



Small simulation

# FULL SCALE

Large and complex

Normally involves  
multiple agencies and  
jurisdictions

More appropriate for  
Emergency Response

# GAME

Online games available

Also for emergency response

Can be competition based

# WORKSHOP

Creates a product

About working with leadership to develop new plans, policies, or procedures

Or review, revise, and update current plans

# SEMINAR



A PRESENTATION



MORE APPLICABLE FOR  
TRAINING



USE FOR TRAINING RANK  
AND FILE EMPLOYEES

# TABLETOP

Saved the most common for last

Scenario based

Application of plans, policies and procedures

Can be large or small scale with only one agency or intra-agency coordination

Create modules, unique focus or move time forward

**Now you have selected your capability and the type of exercise you want to conduct. You have a few more decisions to make.**

Who needs to participate?

When and where will this take place?

If you will be doing an operations-based exercise you will likely need more space and it will take more time to plan and coordinate.



# Time to get **creative**.

But not *too creative*. Scenarios must be **realistic**.



# Testing Orders of Succession:

**Tabletop Example:  
Create a  
powerpoint with a  
scenario and time  
injects to keep  
people talking  
through the  
process.**

Do the managers who will step into new roles know what they are going to do?

Do you have a signed Order of Succession?

Are there limits they need to be careful of?

Legal restrictions or obligations?

# CONCURRENT STEP- EVALUATORS

Documenting the Exercise for later evaluation

If you will be running the tabletop you may need others to note responses.

Should be familiar with organizational plans, policies, and procedures.

# DURING THE EXERCISE

**COOP Coordinator can run the exercise (tabletop) or be part of a group running the exercise (operations based-HSEEP training).**

**Evaluators capture and record player actions**

- What actions took place
- Who performed an action or made a decision
- Where an action or decision took place
- When an action or decision made
- Why an action was performed, or decision made
- How players performed an action or made a decision
- Do not interfere



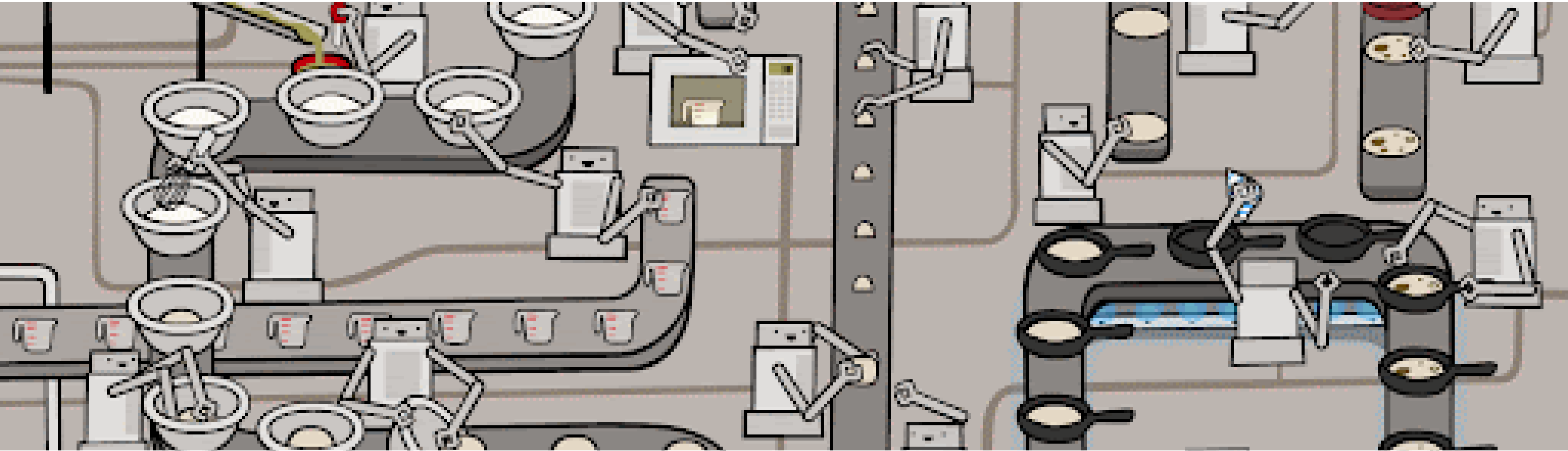
# AFTER ACTION REPORT (AAR) + IMPROVEMENT PLAN (IP)

Immediately following the exercise, you want to have a Hot Wash: Get all players/participants feedback on how the exercise went and how the plan worked or could be improved

After Action Reports consolidate information gathered during the testing and evaluation of an emergency operations plan through exercise contain:

- Executive Summary
- Overview
- Capability Analysis
- Appendices
  - Improvement Plan
  - Participant Roster
  - Acronyms

# Improvement Plan: What needs to be improved, who is going to do it, and when they are going to do it.



Needs to be reviewed by management to help determine priority and assign responsibility

# NEXT STEPS

- Ensure updates are made to the COOP plan
- Additional training is provided if needed
- Purchases made
- Then you begin all over again with the next capability

LET'S CIRCLE BACK ON THAT.



YEAH.

THAT WOULD BE GREAT.

# SOURCES:

HSEEP Training videos: 14 Short videos walking you through the creation of a TT&E program  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL720Kw\\_OojlJRVI3gQiZzj2g72Ez8ISIA](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL720Kw_OojlJRVI3gQiZzj2g72Ez8ISIA)

FEMA Mission Areas and Core Capabilities  
<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/mission-core-capabilities>

FEMA HSEEP Preparedness Toolkit  
<https://preptoolkit.fema.gov/web/hseep-resources>

FEMA Emergency Management Institute Course List  
<https://training.fema.gov/is/crslist.aspx>

Suggested courses:

- IS-120.c An Introduction to Exercises
- IS-139.a Exercise Design and Development
- E0146 Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Training Course

FEMA Level 1 Professional Continuity Practitioner Requirements  
<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/continuity/excellence-series/level-1>